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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000615

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STATE FOR NEA/I AND NEA/ARP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [KTFN](#) [KU](#) [TERROR](#) [FINANCE](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR AND DEFENSE/INTERIOR MINISTER DISCUSS  
SECURITY COOPERATION, C/T, AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

REF: A. KUWAIT 514  
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 419

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: During an April 24 meeting with Defense/Interior Minister Shaykh Jaber Al-Mubarak, the Ambassador emphasized USG readiness to provide security assistance to Kuwait, stressed the need to continue investigating suspected terrorist financiers, and urged follow up on the recommendations of the Critical Energy Infrastructure assessment report when completed. Shaykh Jaber welcomed U.S. support, agreed on the need to counter domestic extremists and terrorism financiers, and said energy security was one of his top priorities and Kuwait's greatest vulnerabilities. End summary.

Kuwait Welcomes U.S. Security Assistance  
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[1](#)2. (S/NF) The Ambassador and BG Mark Solo, the Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation-Kuwait (OMC-K), met April 25 with First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Shaykh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. The Ambassador congratulated Shaykh Jaber on being re-appointed to his two major ministerial positions. The Ambassador praised recent mil/mil discussions on expanded security cooperation and emphasized the USG's willingness to provide continued and tailored assistance, particularly through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programming, to meet Kuwait's needs. Shaykh Jaber expressed satisfaction with and appreciation for U.S. support, particularly increased Patriot missile protection, and agreed on the need to be prepared for regional contingencies.

Combating Terror Finance and Extremism  
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[1](#)3. (S/NF) The Ambassador stressed the need to continue to investigate the suspected terrorism financing activities of several Kuwaiti charities, in particular the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS), and individual Kuwaiti extremists. Shaykh Jaber admitted that "Kuwait has extremists" and agreed on the need to counter them, noting that such groups/individuals are opportunistic and use religion as a cover for their political aspirations. "They are a real shame on our society, on our government, and on our religion," he said. "True Islam is far from what they are teaching." He said the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs has procedures in place to prevent extremists from spreading their ideas in Kuwait. The Ambassador stressed the importance of such programs and encouraged Kuwait to learn from Saudi Arabia's religious re-education program. He also expressed appreciation for recent cooperation on an Iraqi terrorism financing case involving a third country national,

urging similar cooperation against Kuwaitis who facilitate terror.

#### Energy Infrastructure Protection Top Priority

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¶4. (S/NF) Shaykh Jaber was "very interested" in reviewing the final report on the Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection assessment conducted in Kuwait in March (ref B). He said petroleum sector security is one of his primary concerns and one of Kuwait's greatest vulnerabilities. The Ambassador noted that the report would likely recommend accelerated training for MOI personnel and stressed the importance of developing human resources, rather than relying on technology. The Minister agreed.

#### Public Should Know About Security Preparations

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¶5. (S/NF) Shaykh Jaber said he was pushing Parliament to allow the May 1 discussion on Kuwait's security preparedness to be public rather than closed-door as is currently planned (ref A). He argued this would help dispel rumors and fear about the possibility of a U.S.-Iran conflict and its impact on Kuwait.

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LeBaron